

A shell from Hawaii.

I have something pretty that sits on my windowsill in my kitchen. It's a shell from Hawaii. I'm not sure what kind of shell it is, or what it is called, but it certainly is something that I love to look at. My mother brought it back from her recent trip there. She went during the Winter, which apparently is one of the best times to go, with it not being too hot. I would like to say that she went scuba diving and found the shell, but then again, you would never find a shell that looks like this underwater. It has been processed, in a way. The outer most layer of the shell has been ground off. Underneath, a pearly white layer is revealed. It's stunning. There must have been a creature like a crab that lived inside it, because there is plenty of room for a little animal in its cavity. I'm not really into jewels, ornaments, and decorations around my house, but I do love shells. I think it's because there is usually a story that comes with them about when they were found, or how a person found them. I still have a tiny shell in my handbag that I found on one of the beaches in Mallorca, Spain, last summer when I went with the kids. When I'm rummaging around, looking for my cell phone or my check book, I will stumble across it. It gives me an unexpected reminder of our vacation. My sister also brought me a beautiful shell from New Zealand. It's called a Paua shell, and has the coloration of a bluish, greenish rainbow. Again, the outside has been ground off, revealing the unexpectedly beautiful layer underneath. When I started to write this podcast, I remembered that up in our storage area, we have a collection of large, conch-type shells from Mexico. My husband and I found them years ago while we were snorkelling. We used to have them placed around our bath in our previous house, but when we moved, we boxed them up and forgot about them. I'll have to fish them out today, to add to our growing collection of shells around the house.

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary: recent, to grind, cavity, to rummage.

1. His recent illness has left him tired and thin.
2. He uses a metal file to grind down the piece of stone. He ground off enough stone yesterday to make the basic shape of the statue.
3. When they knocked down the old, rock house, they found a large cavity in one of the walls where the owners stored stolen paintings.
4. The table in the shop was covered in clothes. You had to rummage around to find what you wanted.

